

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-02 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 3599

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, SHUM, SU
SUBJECT: SADIQ AL-MAHDI TAKES SSU OATH AND JOINS POLITBURO

REF: KHARTOUM 3474 (NOTAL)

1. SADIQ AL-MAHDI TOOK OATH AS MEMBER OF POLITBURO OF SUDAN
SOCIALIST UNION (SSU) BEFORE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI ON AUGUST 3
IN CEREMONY ATTENDED BY TWO AIDES WHO ARE ALREADY MEMBERS OF
SSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE, DR. ABDEL HAMID SALIH AND DR. UMAR
NUR AL-DAYIM. PRESS NOTED OATH-TAKING AUGUST 3.

2. IN MESSAGE PRINTED JULY 17 AND BEING DISTRIBUTED TO ANSAR,
SADIQ AL-MAHDI APPEALS FOR THEIR RETURN TO SUDAN AND COOPERATION
WITH NIMEIRI. EMBASSY RECENTLY OBTAINED AND TRANSLATED TWO
PAGE DOCUMENT WHICH ASSERTS THAT RECONCILIATION IN SUDAN IS
BASED ON NINE PRINCIPLES, INCLUDING "TO BASE SUDAN LAWS ON
ISLAMIC LAW," TO REMOVE ALL EFFECTS OF PAST DISPUTES, TO
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BRING ABOUT FREEDOM AND FAIR PARTICIPATION FOR ALL PEOPLE
OF SUDAN AND TO "RESPECT THE ANSAR AND REFUTE INSULTING
PROPAGANDA." LAST INCLUDES EXPLANATION OF WHAT HAPPENED
TO IMAM EL HADI AND HIS COMPANIONS AT KURMUK "WHILE EN
ROUTE TO IMMIGRATION" (READ: FLEEING FROM NIMEIRI'S 1970
ATTACK ON ABA ISLAND). SADIQ TELLS ANSAR THAT NIMEIRI BY
CHOOSING RECONCILIATION HAS CLOSED DOOR TO FURTHER VIOLENCE.

IF NIMEIRI KILLED SOME OF US, SADIQ WRITES, WE KILLED SOME OF HIS FOLLOWERS. THAT IS NOW BEHIND US. IT IS BETTER TO RETURN TO SUDAN WHERE ISLAMIC AND ANSAR INTEGRITY IS RESPECTED AND FREEDOM IS GUARANTEED. SADIQ ALSO ASSERTS THAT NIMEIRI PRAISED IMAM AL HADI TO HIS TWO SONS.

3. SADIQ'S PRINTED STATEMENT PROMISES THAT RETURNING ANSAR WILL BE WELL RECEIVED. AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR THEM IN SEVERAL PLACES INCLUDING RAHAD. THESE ARE DESCRIBED AS "MOST FERTILE LANDS IN SUDAN" WHICH WILL BE PROVIDED WITH MOSQUES, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, WELLS AND FARM MACHINERY THROUGH COOPERATIVES.

4. ANSAR WHO HAVE ALREADY COME BACK TO SUDAN WILL SOON BE INFORMED ABOUT NEW SETTLEMENTS AND WORK. TO "BELOVED ONES IN ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY," SADIQ WRITES THAT ETHIOPIA HAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO WALIEL DIN AND NASR EL DIN TO VISIT THEM IN PREPARATION FOR THEIR RETURN. ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAS PROMISED SADIQ THAT ETHIOPIA WILL HELP IN EVERY WAY. ANSARS IN LIBYA ARE TO AWAIT ENVOY FROM SADIQ WITH DIRECTIVES ON FINAL RETURN.

5. COMMENT: SADIQ TOOK OATH AS MEMBER POLITBURO AFTER PROLONGED WRANGLING AND SOME EMBARRASSMENT TO NIMEIRI OVER HIS REFUSAL TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH NIMEIRI'S VERSION OF SSU. THUS OATH-TAKING IS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS
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COOPERATION AND IS PUBLIC SIGNAL TO SUDANESE PUBLIC THAT SADIQ IS FULLY RECONCILED WITH NIMEIRI. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IN POLITBURO IS NEXT BEST THING TO SENIOR POSITION IN GOVERNMENT ALTHOUGH IT WILL NOT AROUSE SADIQ'S LOCAL POLITICAL ENEMIES TO SAME EXTENT. SADIQ PROBABLY HOPES TO RECOUP PRESTIGE HE MAY HAVE LOST WITH HIS FOLLOWERS WHEN HE ESCHEWED SENIOR PUBLIC OFFICE (REFTEL.) CONCERNING STATEMENT DISTRIBUTED TO ANSAR, SADIQ HAS OBVIOUSLY MADE THOUGHTFUL AND EARNEST ATTEMPT TO UNITE ALL ANSARBACK IN SUDAN AT PEACE WITH NIMEIRI. SOME DISCREPANCIES EXIST; FOR EXAMPLE, HE TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE (REFTEL) THAT ANSAR WOULD BE SEPARATED IN SUDAN "FOR SECURITY REASONS" AND HE INDICATED TO PRESS THAT ETHIOPIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS RETURN OF ANSAR WAS "MYSTERIOUS" AS OPPOSED TO HELPFUL.
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